



c/o Wheel-Trans, 580 Commissioners Street, Toronto, Ontario M4M 1A7

September 11, 2019

TTC Board Members
Toronto Transit Commission
1900 Yonge Street
Toronto, Ontario
M4S 1Z2

Dear Board Members:

The Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT) is forwarding the approved minutes of its General Monthly meetings of June 27, 2019 and July 25, 2019 to the September 24, 2019 Board Meeting for information (attached).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Mazin Aribi
2019 ACAT Chair

Attachments

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting: Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit (ACAT)
Meeting No. 344

Meeting Date: Thursday, June 27, 2019

Location: 1900 Yonge Street
7th Floor Boardroom

Present: Mazin Aribi, Chair
Marian McDonell, Co-Vice Chair
Angela Rebeiro, Co-Vice Chair
Margo Brodie
Mary Burton
Anita Dressier
Bobbi Moore
Craig Nicol
James Pyo
Lauri Sue Robertson
Igor Samardzic
Sam Savona

Pool Member: Ian Payton

Regrets: Jessica Geboers
Thomas Richardson

TTC Representatives: Matt Hagg, Senior Planner – System Accessibility
Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager - Customer Service, Wheel-Trans
Heather Brown, Manager - Customer Communications
Dean Milton, Manager-Strategic Initiatives
Desrienne McIlwrick, Lead Travel Trainer
Cameron Penman, Division Manager - Customer Service, Wheel-Trans
Jim Ross, Chief Operating Officer
Ricardo Couto, Division Manager, Bus Transportation
Tony Clunies, Project Management, ITS
John Breynon, Chief Instructor, OTC
Stephan Boston, Chief Instructor, OTC
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans (Acting)

Copies: Rick Leary, Chief Executive Officer
Kirsten Watson, Deputy CEO – Operations
Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, Chief Customer Officer
Orest Kobylansky, Executive Director - Operations
Susan Reed Tanaka, Chief Capital Officer
Josie La Vita, Chief Financial Officer
Susan Sperling, Executive Director – Corporate Communications (Acting)
James Ross, Chief Operating Officer
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans
Deborah Brown, Head of Customer Communications
TTC Board Members

Items Discussed:

1. Call to Order / Attendance
2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Remarks from ACAT Chair
5. Presentation – Stop Calling
6. Review and Approval of May 30, 2019 Minutes
7. Business Arising Out of Minutes/Outstanding Items
8. Deputation: Nil.
9. Subcommittee Reports and Updates
 - Design Review
 - Service Planning
 - Wheel-Trans Operations
10. Photo ID Cards for Wheel-Trans Customers
11. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting
12. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update
13. Report on Customer Liaison Panel
14. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters
15. Report on ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with CEO and Chair
16. Review of Correspondence
17. Other / New Business
18. Next Meeting – July 25, 2019
19. Adjournment

1. Call to Order/Attendance

Mazin Aribi, ACAT Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m. and attendance was taken.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

James Pyo declared a conflict of interest regarding any discussions that ACAT might have concerning transit responsibilities between Toronto and the province (the “subway upload”) as he is an employee of the Ontario Public Service. With ACAT’s approval, James Pyo remained in the meeting.

3. Approval of Agenda

On motion by Bobbi Moore and seconded by Anita Dressler, the agenda was approved with amendments.

- An agenda item was added, “Presentation - Stop Calling.”
- An addition under New Business - Two Motions regarding Elevators at Interchange Stations.

4. Remarks from the ACAT Chair

Chair Mazin Aribi thanked all the ACAT members who volunteered to work at the ACAT Booth at the Access Expo held on June 6 and 7, 2019. He also thanked the TTC and Wheel-Trans staff for making all the arrangements to make the expo a success.

The Chair also thanked the members who volunteered for a photoshoot on June 11, 2019 at the new Humber College Access Hub; attendance at the accessibility training for Scarborough City Taxi on June 22 and 23, 2019; and for assisting staff to TTC standards for accessible bus stops on June 24, 2019.

On June 22, 2019, ACAT Chair, Mazin Aribi attended the 2019 APTA International Rail Rodeo Family Event and reception in response to TTC CEO Rick Leary’s invitation.

On June 4, 2019, Mazin Aribi attended the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) meeting as an observer. The following items were discussed: Accessibility Feedback on Preparing the City of Toronto for Automated Vehicles; Update from the Accessibility Team, People, Equity and Human Rights; Accessibility Feedback on Official Plan Review – Transportation; Request for Presentation to Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee on the Poverty Reduction Strategy; and Accessibility in Dog Off-Leash Areas.

The next TAAC meeting will be held on July 12, 2019, 6:30 p.m. at City Hall.

The ACAT Executive received an email from TTC Chair Jay Robinson regarding two important motions passed unanimously at City Council meeting on June 18, 2019. The two motions are:

That:

1. City Council direct the City Manager to include accessibility as a key focus of ongoing transit responsibility alignment discussions with Metrolinx and the Government of Ontario.
2. City Council direct the City Manager to request the Minister of Transportation and the Chief

Executive Officer, Metrolinx to consult the Toronto Transit Commission's Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit in the planning of future transit expansion projects.

Mazin Aribi reminded the ACAT members about a public meeting concerning transit responsibilities between Toronto and the province today at City Hall at 6:30 p.m.

5. Presentation – Stop Calling

Jim Ross, Chief Operating Officer, Ricardo Couto, Division Manager, and Tony Clunies, Project Management provided a presentation.

An audit was conducted in June 2019 showing that automated next stop announcements on buses were correctly made 93.3% of the time, which is the lowest rating in the last six years. Some of the problems were the bus stops being announced prematurely, too late, or not at all by the geofences that prompt the bus to call the stop automatically. This does not affect the streetcar system, only buses.

Ricardo Couto said that increasing failures are technical issues within the system. These could be caused by stop moves due to construction, incorrect vehicle odometer values, incorrect route patterns, etc.

Staff are currently taking steps to address the issue. Bus Transportation is providing daily reminders to Operators that stops announcements must be made manually if the automatic announcement fails, and Operators have been reminded about procedures to accommodate customers with vision loss if they miss their stop due to announcement issues.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

ACAT members expressed many concerns such as construction and its impact on the accurate calling of bus stops, and some Operators turning off the automated announcements that announces the stops because it is disruptive. Staff clarified that Operators do not have the ability to turn off the automated announcements and that if announcements are not being made it is due to technical issues with the system.

Staff advised that they are working closely with the City of Toronto, and discuss the upcoming and current construction operation once a month with Toronto Mayor John Tory. Staff mentioned that if road work is needed, the City tries to align it with water line maintenance and other construction that is needed in that area. Operators are informed early on about the road work. Unless there is an emergency, Operators might not have the information and are unable to assist the passengers in announcing a moved stop in advance. In this case, the Operator should call the stop manually.

Staff ensured that the Operators have a procedure to follow. Operators must call the stops if needed. If they do not, Staff recommends people to report the behaviour through the Customer Service help line.

The Committee pointed out that, although calling afterwards may help fix the problem in the future, for now it remains a safety issue. The Committee asked if it is possible to reinforce stop announcements during Operator training.

Staff proposed a new protocol for ACAT members to report any stop announcement issues by

phone or email to help TTC resolve this issue faster. Once Staff are aware of the situation, they can investigate the bus Operator location, ask the Bus Division for the technical data, and investigate the Operator at the time of event. ACAT will receive the direct phone number to report bus stop calling incidents within the week. It was stressed that the number is for ACAT members only, and only for stop calling issues.

Staff requested a follow-up meeting with ACAT at the end of September 2019 in order to report back on progress to resolve the technical issues.

The Committee reminded TTC staff that it is not only affecting people with vision and/or hearing impairments, but also people with cognitive problems who need to know where they are, as well as tourists and people who are new to the city.

6. Review and Approval of May 30, 2019 Minutes

On motion by Margo Brodie and seconded by Bobbi Moore, the minutes of May 30, 2019 were approved.

7. Business Arising Out of Minutes / Outstanding Items

- Item: Lack of Tactile Information on Poles for Shared Bus Stops - work is still ongoing and to be completed in the Fall.
- Item: Review of the Impact of Curb Side Bike Lanes on Wheel-Trans Customers and Operators in Accessing Certain Pick-Up / Drop-Off Locations – Ongoing. SPS April 3, 2019 minutes were sent to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee.
- Item: GTHA Accessibility Advisory Committee Joint Meeting – Ongoing. Meeting place on May 14, 2019. York Region has offered to host the next meeting in the Fall of 2019, which is to be confirmed.
- Item: Subway Platform Gap (Vertical and Horizontal Gap) – Ongoing. The project team will attend the DRS meeting in July to provide an update on the gap measurement study.
- Item: Motion – Staff to work with the ACAT Executive to revise the Application Process for 2021 Membership – Ongoing. Staff to report back in August 2019.
- Item: Need for Elevator Redundancy at Finch West Interchange Station to the LRT Platform Level - ACAT to propose a motion and bring it to the Committee.

Members brought forward a concern regarding the wording of “Elevator Redundancy” and how it can be misinterpreted. It was explained that the item is about elevator alternatives, not a redundancy. The rewording is to be discussed thoroughly when the motion is presented in August 2019.

8. Deputation

Nil.

9. Subcommittee Reports and Updates

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) – Craig Nicol, Chair

DRS held two meetings in June.

A DRS meeting was held on June 5, 2019.

- PRESTO Sedan Taxi and Support Person Cards.

PRESTO-enabled Support Person Assistance Cards will be issued to replace the existing cards. The cards would have a photo and the customers' information to connect that card to the person needing support.

PRESTO on sedan taxis will use existing taxi tablets with a special PRESTO app and card reader. The app will display the fare collected and balance, it will also be possible to see the transaction history. There will be an option to have audio output of the data; no sensitive personal information, for example names or addresses, will be spoken.

- Interchange Station Motion

DRS discussed and decided upon two interchange station elevator motions to be presented at the June ACAT General Meeting.

- VISION System Update

TTC installed a new VISION system on all buses to centralize data collection and control of accessibility announcement / display information. An update was provided on the installation status and capabilities of the system.

DRS members raised concerns about early stop announcements, missing or inaudible exterior route and destination announcements. Staff responded that the early announcement problem is being investigated for correction and the exterior announcement problem will be investigated.

The issue of exterior route and destination announcements timing out when at rest in a station was raised. Staff replied that the time would be extended.

DRS asked that the issue of bus lighting, displays and announcements no longer functioning when the engine is turned off for emission control be resolved, such that these items remain active in revenue service. Staff responded that these concerns will be reviewed to seek a solution.

- Bus Platform Tactile Wayfinding Pilot Project

Staff reviewed a pilot project for York Mills station to establish stop identification poles, mobility device waiting areas, and tactile wayfinding paths on bus platforms. The objective is to make it easier for stop identification and boarding. The pilot is to run for six to 12 months with a starting date to be determined

A DRS meeting was also held on June 26, 2019.

Mosaic Transit and Metrolinx presented the 60% design for the Finch West Humber College station. This is a partially open air station with entrance buildings at each end. The station features redundant elevator access, accessible washrooms, tactile attention and direction indicator flooring.

Subcommittee members raised issues including stair configuration, lack of escalators, location of platform wayfinding, and lack of a Wheel-Trans lay-by.

The next DRS meeting will held on July 3, 2019.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS) – Anita Dressler, Chair

A SPS meeting was held on June 5, 2019.

Barbara Battistuzzi, Manager – Training, gave a presentation regarding customer service and training of TTC Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) and Customer Service Agents (CSAs). The CSRs are now in subway stations to help customers with the transition period regarding PRESTO.

Also discussed was that the role of Station Collectors will transition to that of CSAs. These staff will be positioned outside of the booths in subway stations to assist customers.

The CSRs attend a one day, 7-hour comprehensive course. Daily debriefs are given to CSRs regarding location, accessibility issues, and general customer service information. SPS members recommended that improvements be made to Customer Service Representatives' and Agents' level of knowledge regarding accessibility to support the Family of Services (FOS) initiatives.

SPS members were advised that, at the Access Expo, the ACAT booth will be staffed by ACAT members during the two-day event at Variety Village on June 7 and 8, 2019.

SPS members were also informed that the TTC Public Forum will be held on September 25, 2019, at the Beanfield Centre, Exhibition Place.

SPS brought to the attention of staff that service announcements in subways are extremely loud and distracting especially to people with vision loss who are sensitive to sounds. Sounds are one of the senses used for independent mobility. SPS members would like this issue to be brought forward to the Communications Subcommittee.

Further discussion ensued regarding bike lanes and lay-bys. TTC staff to follow up.

Streetcar training using ACAT members will be scheduled later in 2019.

The next SPS meeting will be held on July 3, 2019.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS) – Sam Savona, Chair

A WTOS meeting was held on June 13, 2019.

Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager - Customer Service, introduced Cameron Penman who has been appointed as Acting Division Manager - Customer Service, Wheel-Trans.

Ross Visconti, Project Manager, provided an update on the security passwords for the Self-Booking website and app. Security passwords must be a combination of a minimum of six characters with a maximum of 10 including one uppercase letter. This is to make passwords more complex with a higher level of security.

WTOS members were concerned that if the password has to have multiple characters plus an upper and lowercase letter and number, it might be too difficult for customers to remember and/or type in. Ross Visconti clarified that it is acceptable to use numbers and symbols with a minimum of 6 characters, regardless of upper and lowercase sensitivity; however, one of those characters must be a number. He explained that there will be an option to change passwords if forgotten or if the reset button is pressed by accident. The user is also able to maintain the same password as before, and would not have to create a new one.

WTOS members discussed the impact of bike lanes for Wheel-Trans to pick-up and drop-off riders. This is an ongoing matter and more discussion is needed.

Dean Milton, Manager – Strategic Initiatives, explained that, in late Fall / early Winter 2020, the process for re-registration of the 24,000 riders, pre-2017, will commence. These customers will be required to go through the re-registration process, and will begin with customers that travel most frequently on Wheel-Trans and who would benefit most from more travel options. It will take several years to complete. Dean explained that there would be more information to be provided to customers at the July 23, 2019 Public Meeting.

Dean Milton also reported that customers will be provided with ample lead time to re-register and an end-date of service will be placed on their file. Should the customer fail to re-register prior to the service end date, they will be able to call Wheel-Trans Customer Service to extend service end date to accommodate the customer.

Dean Milton informed WTOS members about a Public Meeting on July 23, 2019 at Metro Hall which will be focused on conditional trip matching and the re-registration of 2017 customers. All members are invited to attend.

Lodon Hassan provided WTOS with the top four complaints received thus far in 2019 are as follows:

1. Concerns about Re-certification process; will the process be fair/equitable, and customers' concerns about not being able to use FOS
2. Call volumes in Reservations
3. Contacted Operators not having specific details about pick up/drop off locations; leading to customers being not showed
4. Scheduling trip in progress – customers wanting to know their trip details right away.

WTOS will monitor these concerns.

The next WTOS meeting will be held on July 11, 2019.

10. Photo ID Cards for Wheel-Trans Customers

Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager Customer Service, received a recommendation from the Auditor-General regarding photo ID cards for all Wheel-Trans customers in order to use Wheel-Trans services. This was brought to WTOS for review and to provide feedback regarding its implementation.

Comments and Questions from Committee Members

Staff explained that the recommendation of the photo ID is a way to reduce fare evasion, with added measures to safety and security for people using the Wheel-Trans service. The photo ID would be to ensure that no one else is taking advantage of another person's Wheel-Trans service. The idea would be to make sure that, at pick-up, the passenger is eligible to use the Wheel-Trans service and should they be able to ride it with proper ID. For now, the TTC does not require any photo ID for Wheel-Trans users. This would be a new process.

In response to members' query, Staff stated that fraud is happening but are not sure as to what extent. An investigation has not been done and Staff wanted to bring it forward to ACAT beforehand. Currently, TTC Operators will flag if people other than the appropriate customer are using the system.

There was an in-depth discussion between Staff and ACAT members about the positive and negative aspects of having a Wheel-Trans Photo ID card.

Some of the positive aspects is that the photo ID could work as a form to help passengers get the right transit service as well as any safety issue regarding passenger fraud, and also prove that the passenger is in need of Wheel-Trans service.

Some of the negative aspects is that TTC customers who use the conventional system solely do not require a photo ID card to use the service and, therefore, this would be inequitable. Also, a concern was raised about having another photo ID card which add to the number of cards needed to travel on the TTC.

Staff will further investigate this matter and report back in July.

ACAT's general consensus for photo ID is to move that they do not agree. Sam Savona brought forward the motion to reject the photo ID.

Motion: ACAT to reject the idea of photo ID for Wheel-Trans customers.

The motion passed with two members abstaining.

11. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting

DRS:

- PRESTO sedan taxi fare collection & support person cards
- VISION Project update and shortcomings
- Finch West Humber College Station review

SPS:

- Presentation received from TTC Training regarding training of Customer Service Representatives and Agents for better customer service especially during the transition into PRESTO
- Ongoing discussion regarding the volume of service announcements on the subway system
- Discussion on Bike lanes and lay-bys, and the safety of bike riders and Wheel-Trans customers at pick and drop off locations

WTOS:

- Security Passwords for the Self-Booking site and app
- Process of Re-Registration of Wheel-Trans customers
- Discussion on impact of bike lanes for Wheel-Trans to pick-up and drop-off locations

12. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update

Dean Milton, Manager - Strategic Initiatives, presented an update.

- Communications

Wheel-Trans has contracted an email marketing vendor to allow email communications to customers more frequently and not having to rely just on seasonal newsletters. It offers more flexibility with information dissemination. By using email, Staff can more effectively communicate with the diverse customer base, by using larger font, visuals and graphics, embedded links for more information.

Wheel-Trans is working on updating the ACAT tip sheet for customers, a Travel Handbook and brochure, all of which will be vetted through the Communications Subcommittee. The items are managed by Alicia Sgromo, Communications Consultant, alongside Desrienne McIlwrick, Lead Travel Trainer.

Information will also be posted in every Collector Booth with specific instructions as to where the Wheel-Trans pick-up / drop-off stop is, and which phone numbers to call if a customer receives a no-show, or requires a ride to be scheduled from the subway station.

The review of the Wheel-Trans and TTC website and other print materials is ongoing.

- Customer Experience

Six remaining customer-facing policies are under review. Four are ready for review by the Communications / WTOS subcommittees, and the remaining two are still being reviewed by TTC Legal and Diversity and Human Rights.

Comments and Questions from Committee Members

The Chair requested data regarding Wheel-Trans no shows within certain stations.

Staff answered that, year-to-date, there are 198 no-shows. The majority of the no-shows are happening at the following stations:

- Union Station being the number one most recorded no-shows

- Pioneer Village
- Pape
- York Mills
- Dufferin
- Bloor/Yonge

Most stations have a few no-shows; however, Union Station has 42.

The Chair asked if it is possible to note exactly where the pick-up is located, if a no-show were to occur then Wheel-Trans could know exactly where the miscommunication is. Staff stated that the Operator will leave a no-show slip on the designated board; however, it is not possible to determine if the customer went to the wrong location at the station, or simply failed to show up all together.

Members wanted to confirm that the no-shows occurred primarily for trips scheduled on Wheel-Trans buses or contracted service. A further analysis by staff would be required to capture this.

- Family of Services (FOS)

Staff reported that, last week, a total of 100 scheduled trips to subway station or to the designated stops, of those 100, 87 were to a subway station.

A member raised that it is important that the access hubs have some way of communicating with the TTC in case someone was there to pick up and no one showed up. Meadowvale was used as an example that had no communication.

Staff stated that they are currently exploring the possibility of installing close circuit cameras in the access hubs and possibly a mechanism to allow for customer communication. One of the issues that needs to be clarified is who exactly would the customer be communicating with at the TTC. It also was noted that at the majority of transfer stops along routes there will be no means to communicate with TTC staff.

Dwayne Geddes stated that conventional bus service to Meadowvale Access Hub runs frequently, so customers would not be waiting long for their bus.

Dean Milton advised that the next 20 routes and transfer stops have been evaluated and will be implemented in time for phase two in early Fall 2019, further expanding the Family of Services routes.

- Eligibility (Re-Registration Update)

Customers registered prior to January 1, 2017 will be required to have their eligibility re-assessed under the new criteria. This will be discussed at the July 23, 2019 public meeting. Customers will continue to receive the same level of service up until their re-registration is complete, and they will have an opportunity to appeal the decision if they disagree.

- Access Hubs

Staff reported that the access hub construction schedules are on track on Jane and Eglinton Southwest and Northeast, as well as for Neilson and Ellesmere Southwest and Victoria Park

and Ellesmere Southwest.

- Travel Training

Desrienne McIlwrick, Lead Travel Trainer, presented that 589 customers have expressed interest in travel training. Out of the 589 customers, 221 customers have participated in an event (information session, vehicle exploration day, or station orientation day). 74 customers have received one-on-one training, and 21 customers currently have appointments booked or in the process of booking. Staff are waiting to hear back from the remaining 273 customers.

Comments and Questions from Committee Members

Members asked that out of the 589 customers who reached out for travel training, if they did it themselves or through a caregiver. Desrienne explained that the majority of customers expressed interest themselves. In few cases, when someone is asking to sign up their mother, further questions are asked to determine if the individual is appropriate for the program. It is always best practice to communicate directly with the customer when possible.

Staff explained that they are now hosting Station Orientation Days, which is travel training in small groups, starting at stations with three modes: bus, subway, streetcar. The first event took place at Broadview Station. Nine customers responded and three attended. Dundas West Station is being considered for the next event in the third week of July.

Members asked, if during the travel training session, if there have been customers that have been unsuccessful with the training, and what happens. Staff explained that they would never want to encourage people to use the system if they feel unsafe, and only encourage customers that have the skills to travel safely and independently.

A member mentioned that she participated in one of the travel training events and wondered how Wheel-Trans informs someone that they are incapable. Staff answered with strategies to address the issue at hand:

- Not to give vague information, by saying "maybe one day in the future". Be straightforward, honest, and realistic
- Giving the person constructive criticism and giving them feedback on how they can improve. Talk it out
- Encourage the person to try, but be aware of the limits. If travel training is not appropriate for the customer, encourage them to not give up on their goal. Give suggestions of how they can keep working on it.

Members suggested that Wheel-Trans should consider reaching out to the customers that have no-showed their Wheel-Trans rides at Union station to see if any of them were repeat customers and offer travel training.

Members reminded staff that Dundas West station has a lot of construction and are not sure if it is suitable for the next Station Orientation Day. Staff stated that the construction at Dundas West station will be used as a teaching opportunity to teach customers how to safely navigate these areas. Construction is a constant in the city, and these are valuable skills to learn.

13. Report on Customer Liaison Panel (CLP) - Anita Dressler, ACAT Representative

No CLP meeting was held since the last ACAT meeting.

14. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters

A TTC Board Meeting was held on June 12, 2019 at City Hall.

The approved ACAT meeting minutes for April 25, 2019 were received by the TTC Board.

Staff presented reports to the TTC Board which is of interest to ACAT:

- Auditor General's Report – Toronto Transit Commission – 2019 Results of Follow-up of Previous Audit Recommendations
- Dupont Station Easier Access III – Status Update was given to the TTC Board.
- 5-Year Service Plan & 10-Year Outlook – Status Update
- Automated Transit Shuttle Pilot Project
- PRESTO Implementation Update – June 2019

The TTC Board approved contracts to make Bay, Keele, and Sherbourne subway stations accessible as part of the Easier Access program.

Mazin Aribi, once again, invited and encouraged the TTC Board members to attend ACAT meetings.

The Next TTC Board meeting will be held on July 10, 2019 at City Hall.

15. Report on ACAT Executive Quarterly Meeting with CEO and Chair

The ACAT Executive Quarterly meeting was held on June 6, 2019 which was attended by TTC Vice-Chair Alan Heisey; Kirsten Watson, TTC Deputy CEO – Operations; Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans (Acting), with 2 Staff members from TTC Chair Jaye Robinson's office, and the ACAT Executive.

- Communications between the TTC and Metrolinx for Future Projects

There have been some improvements in communication with Metrolinx, as the ACAT Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) has been receiving updates and presentations on the building of the Finch West LRT. ACAT, however, would like the TTC Board to continue to monitor and improve ongoing communication between Metrolinx and the TTC.

TTC staff recommended that ACAT use its minutes which are sent to the TTC Board to identify a list of specific improvements its members would like to see and to open discussion with the TTC Board. Sharing best practices with Metrolinx and using ACAT's long history of knowledge has proven to be invaluable.

- Elevator Redundancy at Interchange Subway Stations

ACAT is requesting that the TTC consider installing a second elevator from the concourse to the platform level at Finch West subway station to provide elevator redundancy option for better transfer access between Line 1 and Line 6 (Finch West).

The ACAT Chair stated that the TTC should let Metrolinx know that the right design for interchange stations is to have elevator redundancy, and that Metrolinx is advised to build two elevators instead of one for every interchange station at platform level.

ACAT was asked to raise this issue with the TTC Board with better justifications and statistics for there to be a resolution to implement these elevator redundancies at interchange stations. ACAT will be recommending the need for the Easier Access Phase 4 study to include the need for these elevators to be built in these stations.

- Impact of Curb Side Bike Lanes on Wheel-Trans Customers and Operators

The ACAT Service Planning Subcommittee sent their April 3, 2019 minutes to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) to express ACAT's ongoing concerns. At their April 11, 2019 meeting, TAAC members also expressed their concerns that some of the designs do not ensure the safety of Wheel-Trans customers and more consultations and suggestions need to better accommodate persons with accessible needs. This issue had also been referred to the ACAT Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee to review with Wheel-Trans Operations staff.

The On-street Bikeway Design Guidelines guide is supposed be completed by June 2019. TTC Vice Chair Alan Heisey commented that if on-street parking is included in the discussion, he would be in favor of that and would support it.

ACAT wants to make sure that Wheel-Trans customers connecting to the subway are treated as a priority. Wheel-Trans customers on a Family of Services trip need to feel safe when transferring between the Wheel-Trans vehicles and certain subway stations.

- ACAT's Concerns Regarding the Slow Pace of the Construction of Fixes for the Vertical Gaps on Subway Platforms

After many years that ACAT has requested the TTC fix the vertical gaps on specific subway platforms, actions were started in 2018. It has been almost a year and the implementation has been slow; only St. George Southbound, Eglinton Southbound, and half of Eglinton Northbound have been resolved and St Clair to follow.

There are still few more stations that need to be done and ACAT finds this situation not acceptable. Soon it will be mandatory for Wheel-Trans customers with conditional eligibility to use the subway as part of the Family of Services. Wheel-Trans customers need to feel safe when using the subway without fearing injury or being stuck in the gap.

Staff recommended that ACAT receive an update in July and ACAT can make their recommendation to speed up the process.

- Follow Up with the May 14, 2019 GTHA Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) Meeting

The ACAT Chair stated the GTHA AAC meeting on May 14, 2019 was well attended. A motion was moved to create AAC working groups from other municipalities. Three AAC working groups were identified, namely Standard Design, Cross Boundary Travel, and Communications.

The next meeting will be hosted by York Region Transit. The AAC working groups will work with their staff liaisons to provide consistent advice to their respective advisory committees and municipalities.

- Outstanding Items

Staff asked for a list from ACAT that TTC Chair Jaye Robinson would consider and raise with their provincial counterparts.

The ACAT Chair concluded the meeting by emphasizing the issue of accessibility and elevator redundancy as it disrupts customers' trips if an elevator is not working. Another factor with interchange stations is that elevators are needed most due to the amount of people travelling there including people using baby strollers.

The next ACAT Executive Quarterly meeting is scheduled for September 16, 2019.

16. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

17. Other / New Business

- Two Motions Regarding Elevators at Interchange Stations

Two motions were brought by DRS. One motion to address the issue of interchange stations where new LRT lines intersect the existing TTC subway system. The other was related to the Metrolinx LRT station at Finch West where they show one elevator between their concourse and the LRT platform level.

TTC Second Elevator at Subway - LRT Interchange Stations

Subject: Ensuring Maximum Transit Accessibility for ALL CUSTOMERS, Including Those Using MOBILITY DEVICES.

As part of ongoing efforts to expand and improve transit services Metrolinx is constructing LRT lines which intersect with TTC subway lines. When interchanges are created, they need to be designed and constructed for maximum accessibility for all customers. Any design feature that may compromise accessibility will affect the attractiveness of TTC travel for customers using mobility devices (i.e. wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers).

ACAT is concerned that single elevator connections within existing TTC stations will become a bottleneck to accessible transfer between lines, i.e. a barrier within the TTC's rapid transit network.

Background:

ACAT through the Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) has been engaged in an accessibility review of LRT designs as presented by Metrolinx and their contractors. With respect to Subway - LRT interchange stations, there are several elevator connections from concourse to street level; however, in the TTC portion of some interchange stations only one elevator is installed between concourse and subway platform level.

It is critical to accessibility that the greatest number of riders can consistently, safely, and independently use the system. Elevators are installed in stations to ensure accessibility for riders with limited mobility. Elevator service that may be inconsistent due to breakdown or maintenance will, in some cases, prevent customers from reaching their destination by preventing transfer between LRT and Subway. To, by design, not consider breakdown or overhaul is a violation of the very precept of accessibility upon which elevator equipment is provided in the first place.

We also note that the TTC, as part of its mission to provide barrier-free, accessible service that is efficient, reliable and in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), is currently transforming the way customers use accessible transit services via the Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy. A key component of this strategy is promoting the “family of services” concept to customers, meaning those who are able to use conventional transit modes do so, ensuring the availability of Wheel-Trans service for those who need it.

This means that an increasing number of customers with disabilities will be asked to use the mass transit system for all or part of their journey. As this places more pressure on the conventional system to accommodate customers with varying needs, it will be more important than ever that those who use mobility devices can expect to use in-station elevators consistently, especially when these stations are marked “accessible”.

Comments and Questions from Committee Members

A member questioned if additions can be made to the LRT contract at this late date.

DRS members said that the contract is not between the City or the TTC, rather the contract is between Metrolinx and the developer. DRS mentioned that they raised similar issues for Eglinton Crosstown station elevator control panels.

Motion: In the interest of removing physical barriers for customers with disabilities ACAT recommends the following to the TTC Board regarding the issue of TTC elevator service:

1. That for the Finch West subway station, the TTC undertake to install a second elevator between concourse and subway platform levels;
2. That for the Kennedy subway station, the TTC undertake to install a second elevator between concourse and subway platform levels;
3. Alternately, that the TTC consider including Finch West and Kennedy second elevators between concourse and subway platform as part of the Easier Access Phase 4 study.

Unanimously approved.

Metrolinx Finch West LRT Second Elevator

Subject: Ensuring Maximum Finch West Light Rail Transit (FWLRT) Line 6 Accessibility for ALL CUSTOMERS, Including Those Using MOBILITY DEVICES.

As part of ongoing efforts to expand and improve transit services, Metrolinx is constructing the FWLRT which is expected to be operated by the TTC. As a new build, the FWLRT needs to be designed and constructed for maximum accessibility for all customers. Any design feature that may compromise accessibility will affect the attractiveness of TTC travel for customers using mobility devices (i.e. wheelchairs, scooters, and walkers). Based on material presented to ACAT by Metrolinx, ACAT is concerned that planned designs for the Finch West LRT station lack elevator redundancy potentially introducing a barrier into the TTC's rapid transit network.

Background:

ACAT through the Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) has been engaged in an accessibility review of FWLRT designs as presented by Mosaic Transit and Metrolinx.

With respect to the Finch West LRT station, there are several elevator connections from concourse to street level; however, only one elevator is indicated to be installed between concourse and LRT platform level. At this point, Mosaic Transportation have agreed to incorporate a protected area for a second elevator between concourse and platform level; however, a second elevator is not included in the project specifications.

It is critical to accessibility that the greatest number of riders can consistently, safely, and independently use the system. Elevators are installed in stations to ensure accessibility for riders with limited mobility. Elevator service that may be inconsistent due to breakdown or maintenance will in some cases prevent customers from reaching their destination by:

1. Preventing transfer between LRT and Subway;
2. Breaking the link between LRT and bus that will be necessary to make a trip along Finch Avenue West; this is currently a seamless accessible bus trip.

To, by design, not consider breakdown or overhaul is a violation of the very precept of accessibility upon which elevator equipment is provided in the first place.

We also note that the TTC, as part of its mission to provide barrier-free, accessible service that is efficient, reliable and in compliance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), is currently transforming the way customers use accessible transit services via the Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy. A key component of this strategy is promoting the "family of services" concept to customers, meaning those who are able to use conventional transit modes do so, ensuring the availability of Wheel-Trans service for those who need it.

This means that an increasing number of customers with disabilities will be asked to use the mass transit system for all or part of their journey. As this places more pressure on the conventional system to accommodate customers with varying needs, it will be more important than ever that those who use mobility devices can expect to use in-station elevators consistently, especially when these stations are marked "accessible".

Motion: In the interest of removing physical barriers for customers with disabilities ACAT recommends the following to the TTC Board regarding the issue of FWLRT elevator service:

1. That for the Finch West LRT project, the TTC request Metrolinx to follow the practice of providing redundant elevators at interchange stations as established for ECLRT Line 5;

2. That the TTC request Metrolinx revise requirements for the Finch West LRT station to provide a second elevator connecting the platform and concourse levels;
3. That the TTC request that any FWLRT stations containing elevators have more than one accessible means connecting the entry with the train platform.

Unanimously approved.

- Other Business

A member asked about Operators being required to wear a mask when sick as it would be in the best interest of the customers to avoid getting them sick. Lodon Hassan replied that the TTC does not have a policy in place for people to wear a mask if they are sick. This will be discussed during the WTOS meeting.

Dwayne Geddes added that in relation to sicknesses, TTC encourage Operators who are not well to not come into work. Every operator is seen by a supervisor and if they look under the influence or sick, the Operator is asked to go home.

In response to ACAT's query, staff stated that they expect contractors to have the same level of supervision before their drivers go out to work.

Members suggested that Operators have a box of masks in case a passenger or the Operator is experiencing symptoms of sickness.

The Chair brought up that Wheel-Trans customers are only able to book up to seven days in advance for a service and wondered if there is a system that allowed them to book earlier than that. Wheel-Trans customers directly approached him to see if there is a way to get an earlier booking. Staff stated that they would consider this suggestion as they are re-designing the system.

18. Next Meeting

The next meeting of ACAT will be held on Thursday, July 25, 2019, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. at 1900 Yonge Street, 7th Floor Boardroom.

19. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:56 p.m.

Elaine Genest
Recording Secretary

TORONTO TRANSIT COMMISSION

COMMITTEE MINUTES

Minutes of Meeting: Advisory Committee on Accessible Transit Meeting No. 345

Meeting Date: Thursday, July 25, 2019

Location: 1900 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON
7th Floor Boardroom

Present: Mazin Aribi, Chair
Marian McDonell, Co-Vice Chair
Angela Rebeiro, Co-Vice Chair
Margo Brodie
Mary Burton
Anita Dressler
Jessica Geboers
Bobbi Moore
Craig Nicol
James Pyo
Lauri Sue Robertson
Igor Samardzic
Sam Savona
Chris Stigas

Regrets: Thomas Richardson

TTC Representatives: Matt Hagg, Senior Planner – System Accessibility
Lodon Hassan, Assistant Manager - Customer Service, Wheel-Trans
Heather Brown, Manager - Customer Communications
Dean Milton, Manager-Strategic Initiatives
Desrienne McIlwrick, Lead Travel Trainer
Charlene Sharpe, Assistant Manager-Policy & Planning, Wheel-Trans
Cameron Penman, Division Manager - Customer Service
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans (Acting)
John Breynon, Chief Instructor, OTC
Romaine Toban, Diversity Consultant

Copies: Rick Leary, Chief Executive Officer
Kirsten Watson, Deputy CEO – Operations
Kathleen Llewellyn-Thomas, Chief Customer Officer
Orest Kobylansky, Executive Director - Operations

Susan Reed Tanaka, Chief Capital Officer
Josie La Vita, Chief Financial Officer
Susan Sperling, Executive Director – Corporate Communications (Acting)
James Ross, Chief Operating Officer
Dwayne Geddes, Head of Wheel-Trans
Deborah Brown, Head of Customer Communications
TTC Board Members

Items Discussed:

1. Call to Order / Attendance
2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
3. Approval of Agenda
4. Remarks from ACAT Chair
5. Review and Approval of June 27, 2019 Minutes
6. Business Arising Out of Minutes/Outstanding Items
7. Deputation: Adam Cohoon
Howard Wax
8. Subcommittee Reports and Updates
 - Communications
 - Design Review
 - Service Planning
 - Wheel-Trans Operations
9. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting
10. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update
11. Report on Customer Liaison Panel
12. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters
13. Review of Correspondence
14. Other / New Business
 - Emergency buttons
 - Minute taker consistency
 - ACAT information booth
15. Next Meeting – August 29, 2019
16. Adjournment

1. Call to Order / Attendance

Mazin Aribi, ACAT Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. and attendance was taken.

2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

Nil.

3. Approval of Agenda

On a motion by Margo Brodie and seconded by Craig Nicol, the agenda was approved with amendments.

- Addition under New Business:
 - Emergency Buttons and Call Buttons inside Subway Trains and Stations
 - Consistency of Minute Takers
 - ACAT Information Booth from the last accessibility fair

4. Remarks for the ACAT Chair

Mazin Aribi reminded the members to use the phone number and email address that were forwarded to ACAT members in order to report any glitches in bus next stop announcements.

Mazin reported that, on July 12, 2019, he and Marian McDonell attended the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) meeting. TAAC members expressed many concerns about Wheel-Trans re-registration and appeal process. Mazin advised that TAAC members are sent ACAT's upcoming agenda and approved minutes, and that they are invited to attend the monthly meetings. As well, Mazin invited the TAAC members to the upcoming Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Public Meeting on July 23, 2019 at Metro Hall and the two ACAT Information sessions and encouraged them to apply for ACAT's 2020 membership. The next TAAC meeting will be held on September 26, 2019, 9:30 a.m. at City Hall.

Mazin reported that the ACAT Executive met with the TTC staff liaisons to discuss the ACAT recruitment information and application process and plans were developed for moving forward for ACAT 2021 membership. A report will be provided at the ACAT August 29th meeting.

Mazin also reminded the members of the two ACAT Information sessions to be held on Friday, July 26, 2019 and on Wednesday, July 31, 2019, at City Hall.

Questions and Comments from the Committee:

Members brought up the issue regarding unscheduled subway closures in the TTC throughout the week. During unscheduled closures, it is difficult to find appropriate staff to assist customers on where to go. Also, more people are forced to use surface transit which leads to crowded buses. Members proposed to refer this item to Service Planning Subcommittee.

Members suggested getting together with TTC staff to discuss how to proceed with issues that arise at TTC Public meetings. A lot of issues are raised which TTC staff should weigh in, and how best to go forward with complaints. Cameron Penman assured members that TTC staff will work to address complaints. He added that Wheel-Trans has already began taking action on complaints that were reported, and is looking at recurring common complaints.

Members also suggested that, at Public meetings, instead of having the audience asking three questions before receiving answers, that the panel should answer one question after the other. Some attendees who have cognitive issues might not remember the first question that was asked, or might be confused on which question is being answered.

5. Review and Approval of June 27, 2019 Minutes

On a motion by Bobbi Moore and seconded by Anita Dressier, the minutes of the June 27, 2019 meeting were approved.

6. Business Arising Out of Minutes/Outstanding Items

- Item: Lack of Tactile Information on Stop Poles for Shared Bus Stops – Ongoing. Installation is scheduled to start in September 2019 and staff to report back in October 2019.
- Item: Review of the Impact of Curb Side Bike Lanes on Wheel-Trans Customers and Operators in Accessing Certain Pick-Up / Drop-Off Locations – Ongoing. Staff to provide an update to WTOS in September 2019.
- Item: GTHA Accessibility Advisory Committee (AAC) Joint Meeting – the next meeting will be in September 2019.
- Item: Subway Platform (Vertical and Horizontal) Gap - an update from DRS will be provided.
- Item: Motion - Need for Elevator Redundancy at Finch West Interchange Station to the LRT Platform Level - An update will be provided in August 2019.
- Item: VISION System Stop Calling Announcements - Staff to provide and update in September 2019.

Questions and Comments from the Subcommittee:

Members asked for clarification that the Stop Calling Announcements are solely concerning buses, and not any other system. The Chair noted that an email was distributed to ACAT members to use in case a stop call had an issue. He also noted that since the email has been distributed, no issues have been reported.

7. Deputation – Adam Cohoon and Howard Wax

Adam Cohoon, Chair of the TTC Riders Accessibility Committee presented concerns about issues of accessibility and the progress towards the creation of a fully accessible TTC by January 2025. A fundamental barrier is the personal cost to travel. Many people with disabilities and people using transit are on limited incomes.

Construction sites in and near the transit system become challenging to navigate, with poor signage, improper indicators for blind persons, and detours being made without consideration for people with disabilities. Snow clearance around stops and stations can be late or poorly done. When new systems are introduced, or transit stops are moved or closed, instructions are not accessible for many of us. In summary, the system becomes less accessible, in violation of AODA legislation.

Howard Wax from Accessible Elections presented his deputation. He provided the link to the report here: https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/963f-2018-Final-Accessibility-Report_2019.pdf, and made note of specific pages from the report (pages 13, 16, and 28).

A presentation was delivered to the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee to solicit feedback on the Accessibility Plan. The Accessibility Outreach Network (AON) consisted of 98 members, representing 49 organizations and 29 community advocates. 51% (34 respondents) indicated that they serve or represent persons with disabilities. 91% (61 respondents) thought that Election Services' outreach initiatives helped reduce barriers to electoral participation.

Moving forward, strengthen relationships with the members of the AON, while continuously monitoring and remedying potential gaps in representation. Investigate emerging public engagement trends and technology to help facilitate remote participation in AON meetings and consultation sessions. Consult with persons with disabilities to inform all areas of election planning, with special attention to new technology, voting options, web applications, accessibility training for voting place staff, and the development of accessibility.

A new voting option was introduced that allowed people unable to attend a voting place to vote from home by requesting a home visit, including people in hospitals and other health care facilities.

All 1,700 voting places underwent multiple inspections that considered accessible criteria such as accessible parking, route of travel, slope and surface, availability of a power door opener, and accessible washrooms for voting place staff. Accessibility issues were rectified through temporary modifications, including installing 60 ramps, 54 door handles, accessibility signage, and accessibility officers. A partnership with Wheel-Trans and ACAT was formed to support accessible transportation options to voting places. This included cross-communication of information and a dedicated Wheel Trans staff who worked with election staff to assist riders with disabilities who experienced difficulty booking a trip or getting to their voting place.

ACAT thanked Adam Cohoon and Howard Wax for their deputations. The Chair thanked members of ACAT and others who contributed and supported these initiatives.

Questions and Comments from the Committee:

Members asked if the Accessible Elections plan would be provincial or federal. Howard Wax responded that Elections Canada has distanced itself from invitation to meetings. There has not been any attendance or contact with the organization. Elections Ontario is present at all the meetings and has taken action on issues. Cooperation is provincial, but not federal.

8. Subcommittee Reports and Updates

Communications Subcommittee (CS) – Mary Burton, Chair

A CS meeting was held on July 4, 2019.

- Interchange Station Announcements on Subways

Line 2 and 3 station stop announcements have been re-recorded to be consistent with announcements on Line 1. The next step will be volume testing to make sure it is fine to be

rolled out on all Line 2 and 3 trains. Pronunciations for stops have also been checked. No implementation date has been set.

- Information on Stop Poles

The initiative to provide tactile information at closely spaced bus stop poles as a trial is proceeding with signs expected to be installed in the Fall.

- Request Stop Program

A message regarding the Request Stop Program will be shared on social media and on the next Wheel-Trans newsletter.

- Family of Services Bus Stop Pole Symbols.

Additional communications around Family of Services bus stop pole symbols are needed to help customers better understand these poles. This was planned to start in June but had been pushed to September.

- Tips for Making People Feel More Comfortable Using the Subway with Mobility Devices.

The subcommittee reviewed and gave feedback regarding the test template for travel tips to make people with mobility devices feel more comfortable using the subway. This sheet would recommend riders to plan their trip through different suggested apps.

- Destination Sign Messages on Buses and Streetcars

Subcommittee members discussed and agreed that TTC should keep the policy to not use promotional or special messages on bus and streetcar destination signs. Special messages can be confusing for both people with limited vision and people with cognitive impairments. Instead, cardboard front window signs would be suitable as per current practice.

- PRESTO Update

Heather Brown provided an update on the PRESTO rollout. Single use tickets are now available at some subway stations. These tickets are meant for people who do not usually ride the TTC or visit the city frequently. This will be communicated by July 8, 2019 through news releases and the website.

The Sedan Taxi PRESTO solution is currently being moved forward with the testing phase.

The TTC will stop selling regular tickets and tokens as of November 2019. The TTC will stop accepting tickets and tokens in mid-2020.

- Wheel-Trans Policy Update

The Do Not Leave Unattended, Cross-Boundary, Fare Payment and Travelling with Infants and Children policies were reviewed and CS members provided feedback. The details were reviewed at the WTOS meeting the following week.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members asked about the date of the stop sale of tickets and tokens. The dates seem to be different than from the website. Heather Brown clarified that the information on the website will be reviewed and corrected.

Members brought up a concern about the proper communication of stop pole locations. The objective would be to create a consistency to where Wheel-Trans vehicles stop. The Chair noted that buildings need to allocate a stop and communicate with Wheel-Trans the location of the pole.

Members stated that TTC Communications needs to make an effort to properly communicate to both Wheel-Trans and conventional TTC customers about the tickets and tokens deadlines. Heather Brown stated that they are currently working on a campaign to promote the stop selling and accepting of tickets and tokens and hope to begin late September or early October.

The next CS meeting will be held on August 1, 2019.

Design Review Subcommittee (DRS) – Craig Nicol, Chair

A DRS held a meeting on July 3, 2019.

- Platform Edge Gap Update

Glen Buchberger reviewed the status of remediation for the platform edge gap and the process for prioritizing platform repairs. Additional study is required to develop a process for outdoor platforms (Davisville and Rosedale). The project with ten stations being addressed per year is expected to run until 2028. St. George and Eglinton now have the vertical gap repair complete and work is moving to St Clair with Finch to follow.

Questions and Comments from Subcommittee Members

Members asked if the work can proceed faster. The response was that lessons were learned and staff are being increased to achieve more in less time.

DRS members recommended that the horizontal gap work be completed at each station right after that station's vertical gap repair. Staff advised that having received the horizontal filler that is the intention.

It was noted that repairs are concentrated on Line 1 due to older construction practices that resulted in higher variability which means that although other stations will require work they are of lower priority due to smaller gap.

- Easier Access Phase 3 (EA3): Rosedale and King Stations

Steve Stewart and TTC Engineering presented EA3 designs for Rosedale (30%) and King stations (100%).

a) Rosedale

Two flow through elevators will be installed along with power doors and tactile attention

indicators at stairs.

Questions and Comments from Subcommittee Members

Members asked if the doors to the overpass corridor could be eliminated or replaced with a power sliding door rather than remaining as power swing doors.

b) King

Design for this station was previously presented to DRS several years ago; however, due to some minor design changes, DRS again reviewed the station. The design installs three flow through elevators and allows for accessible entry via Commerce Court.

Questions and Comments from Subcommittee Members

Owing to the access route via Commerce Court, a concern was raised about the adequacy of wayfinding signage.

DRS spoke to the difficulty of using elevator hall call buttons when located in inside corners. Staff was stated that this issue is not addressed in TTC standards and that standards may need to be revised.

Members were concerned about passenger flow/congestion around elevators E2 and E3. A number of suggestions were put forward to mitigate the problem.

There was a particular concern regarding the size of the shared passage between E3 and the northbound subway platform. Staff responded that space is very limited due to underground services and adjacent buildings.

The next DRS meeting will be held on September 5, 2019.

Service Planning Subcommittee (SPS) – Anita Dressler, Chair

A SPS meeting was held on July 3, 2019.

Stephanie Simard, Strategy and Service Planning, presented on the automated shuttle pilot project called “Minding the Gap”, which is a joint effort from City of Toronto, TTC, and Metrolinx, with funding support from Transport Canada. Service is expected to launch September 2020.

TTC is also working on a five-year service plan and a ten-year outlook. This study will be completed by December 2019. Several consultations will be taking place, stakeholder consultations, engagement and pop up meetings at subway stations, with the aim towards understanding customer priorities. This is a multi-year faceted program to improve service reliability and operating problems, including transit priority measures, and enhanced customer experience at key stop locations. It would provide new connections for improved service and reliability.

The next SPS meeting will be held on September 4, 2019.

Wheel-Trans Operations Subcommittee (WTOS) – Sam Savona, Chair

A WTOS meeting was held on July 11, 2019.

- Fare Evasion

David Moskowitz provided a presentation.

The Community Engagement Unit (CEU) was created in 2017 to bridge the gap between the community and Operators. The focus is on Toronto communities who are using the TTC for shelters, and other purposes rather than transit. The project ran for six months. Over time, the CEU focused on people who use the TTC who are in need of shelter, who are in crisis, who are less fortunate, need housing, and to be able to lend a hand to people needing it. CEU saw a difference between people who are loitering in the station and the people who are using the station for help. The Toronto Police is also involved in the CEU, as well as United Way and over 100 agencies who wanted to help. When CEU find someone in need, they are able to bring the person case by case to get them the help they need within 24 hours.

- Mobile App Update

Abraham Stepanian, Subject Matter Expert, provided an update. The mobile app is currently under testing to make sure it works best for the launch. Staff are currently working on getting all of the suggestions implemented for the final product.

- Review of Wheel-Trans Policies

WTOS members reviewed the Do Not Leave Unattended (DNLU), Cross-Boundary, Travelling with Infants and Children, and Fare Payment policies. Members provided their feedback.

9. ACAT Subcommittee Meeting Highlights for the Next TTC Board Meeting

CS:

- Review of Wheel-Trans Policies
- Review of Destination Sign Messages on Buses and Streetcars
- PRESTO updates
- Travel Tips sheet to make people with mobility devices feel more comfortable using the subway

DRS:

- Discussion on the Subway Platform gap, increasing the speed of remediation and future funding
- Easier Access Rosedale and King Stations

WTOS:

- Review of Wheel-Trans Policies
- Review of the Wheel-Trans Mobile App

10. Wheel-Trans 10-Year Strategy Update

Dean Milton, Manager - Strategic Initiatives, presented an update.

- Wheel-Trans Policies

There are two remaining policies left to be vetted through the TTC Legal and Human Rights departments - Layover and Multiple Stops and Family of Services - Conditional Travel Policy. Once finalized, they will be brought to the attention of WTOS. Dean Milton proposed that members from the Communications Subcommittee attend the WTOS meeting to review the policies at the same time.

Questions and Comments from the Committee:

Members asked when the policies will be disseminated to the public. Dean said part of the procedure before publishing is to be able to determine how the new policies will affect frontline employees, such as drivers or staff. They want to make sure staff are involved and aware of the changes being made.

Members suggested making a proactive choice and mailing out physical copies of the new policies to customers, after concerns were raised about fear of the policies not being promoted properly. This would cost a lot of money, but that the TTC could also use this opportunity to include other notices and newsletters at the same time.

Members brought up the concern of the DNLU policy not being able to accommodate DNLU customers using conventional systems during unscheduled closures. Dean Milton replied that DNLU customers are primarily using Wheel-Trans services, and that unscheduled subway closures will not impact them.

- Family of Services (FOS)

To date, 2,494 FOS trips have been scheduled by customers and a total of 440,000 FOS trips have been taken when factoring in fully diverted trips on the conventional system. There are approximately 13,500 new conditional customers since January 2017. 47 bus/streetcar routes have been evaluated and approved for FOS connections (274 total transfer stops along these routes).

Questions and Comments from the Committee

Members suggested creating a standard operating procedure to assist Wheel-Trans customers when there is a subway turn back and they need to exit the train before their designated stop. Dean indicated that there are many factors to consider including the length of closure. This will be discussed at a future SPS meeting.

- Re-Registration Update

Currently, there are 25,000 active customers who were registered for Wheel-Trans service prior to January 1, 2017 who will require re-registration. The re-registration process will not happen overnight, customers will be given ample notice, and their current eligibility status will remain intact until a full assessment is completed.

- Access Hubs

The next three access hub locations - Jane and Eglinton Southwest and Northeast corner, as well as Victoria Park and Ellesmere - are scheduled to be completed in early fall 2019. Issues were identified with the Jane and Wilson Northeast corner locations, specifically the fact that it is located on a flood plane, and as a result this location is no longer being actively pursued. The remaining Access Hubs are scheduled to be completed in late 2019, early 2020.

- Communications

The Access Newsletter is in process of completion for next week. CS members also reviewed the travel tip sheet and are working on feedback.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member pointed out that re-registration was brought up at the Toronto Accessibility Advisory Committee (TAAC) to present the plans to the committee. There was a motion asking that the re-registration be delayed until 2025, until all stations are accessible. Dean Milton replied that there is no issue with presenting the plan to TAAC; however, the fact remains that the new eligibility was implemented in January 2017, and Wheel-Trans will continue with the plans to begin re-registration in late 2019/early 2020.

- Travel Training

Desrienne McIlwrick presented an update on the Travel Training program. The second station orientation was held on Friday, July 19, 2019 at Dundas West station. Desrienne pointed out that there is construction at the station, which customers appreciated as it was a good learning experience. Customer recruitment strategies will be considered for the next station orientation to help with attendance.

To date, a total of 608 customers showed interest in the Travel Training program. Out of the 608 customers, 221 customers have participated (which refers to customers that have attended a travel training event such as an information session or vehicle exploration). 87 customers have completed one-on-one training, and 20 customers are ongoing (which refers to customers that have booked or are in the process of booking a one-on-one appointment). 17 customers were initially interested in travel training and then declined, and the remaining 263 customers have not yet responded back.

As per a prior request, staff shared that out of the 87 customers that have completed one-on-one training, a total of 9 customers were noted as being unsuccessful with their route.

Questions and Comments from the Committee

A member asked if it would be possible to include the travel training dates and times in the next newsletter. Desrienne stated that instead of advertising a singular event time and place, to have a more general advertisement that informs customers that Station Orientation Days are now being offered and to follow up with staff through the Travel Training program for details of the next event.

A member asked what happens to the 9 customers that were noted as being unsuccessful.

Desrienne explained that she would note the customer as unsuccessful on the execution of the route the customer selected. This does not necessarily mean that the customer would not be successful on other trips. If a customer is unsuccessful, and depending on the scenario, information would be shared with Wheel-Trans Customer Service, who then determines if the customer needs a follow up. Desrienne explained that when possible, she advises customers on how they can improve their travel skills, in order for the customer to continue to work towards their goal of being independent. For other circumstances, a conversation will be had with the customer regarding the areas of concern, with specific attention to safety. It is ultimately the customer's decision what they do with the information or recommendations, and how they choose to travel.

The Chair as well as other members expressed that Desrienne should be able to have a say in eligibility and that there should be a collaboration with the Travel Training program and a customer's Wheel-Trans eligibility status. Members stated that a travel trainer would spend more time with the customer, and have a better understanding of the customer's abilities and challenges, than a functional assessment. Desrienne strongly confirmed that there is no correlation between travel training and a customer's eligibility status. Staff want to encourage customers to participate in our travel training program to improve their travel skills and become more comfortable on the conventional system. Staff do not want to deter customers from this opportunity. If a customer does not agree with their current eligibility, they are able to follow up with Wheel-Trans Customer Service.

A member asked what the relationship was between Travel Training and the Appeal Panel, and how many referrals have been generated. This concern was referred to the Wheel-Trans Subcommittee for more discussion.

11. Report on Customer Liaison Panel

No CLP meeting was held since the last ACAT meeting.

12. Report on TTC Board Meeting and Accessibility Matters

A TTC Board Meeting was held on July 10, 2019.

The approved ACAT minutes of the May 30, 2019 meeting were received by the TTC Board. Chair Mazin Aribi invited and encouraged the TTC Board members to attend the ACAT meetings.

The next Board meeting will be held on Tuesday, September 24, 2019.

13. Review of Correspondence

Nil.

14. Other Items / New Business

New Business

- Emergency Buttons and Call Buttons inside Subway Trains and Stations

An article came out in media about Sherbourne station's emergency button malfunction which left passengers without access to buttons. The CBC's report can be viewed using this link: <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ttc-emergency-button-assault-1.5197633>.

Members noted that the TTC is upgrading the system and that ACAT should be consulted. Last year, the Design Review Subcommittee was consulted about the new system.

- Consistency of Minute Takers

Members requested that the TTC attempt to ensure that there is consistency with the individuals sent to take ACAT minutes.

- ACAT Information Booth from the last Accessibility Fair

Members pointed out that very rarely is anyone looking for information about ACAT at its booth, and instead fair attendees are usually looking for information about Wheel Trans or TTC.

Members pointed out that the TTC pays rent for these spaces, and that it is a waste of time and money.

The Chair noted that the ACAT information and Wheel Trans booths used to be together.

Other Items

Chris Stigas wanted to apologize for the comment made during a CBC interview. He noted that the portion of the interview that was aired was cut significantly and included negative comments only, rather than positive comments that he had also made.

Members noted they wanted to push for a second elevator at Bayview station. There are around four sets of stairs and everyone rushes to use the elevator to avoid the stairs.

Members pointed out that the new Yonge and Sheppard elevator has the buttons incorrectly mounted. Instead of being at the side, they are installed at the front which makes it harder to access.

The new website updates and launch are expected in September, but the correct date will be brought back at the next meeting.

15. Next Meeting

The next meeting of ACAT will be held on Thursday, August 29, 2019, from 1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m., at 7th Floor Boardroom, 1900 Yonge Street.

16. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.

Elaine Genest
Recording Secretary